

Tuesday, April 24, 2007

## **Gov. Minner Hails Success of Cuban Trade Mission**

### **Mountaire Farms signs trade deal with Cuba**

*Dover* – Governor Ruth Ann Minner and John Wise, president of Mountaire Farms, announced that Mountaire Farms of Delaware has signed a trade agreement with Cuba. According to the contract with Alimport, Cuba's purchasing agency for farm and food products, Mountaire will begin shipping container loads of chicken to Cuba in May.

"My administration will continue our efforts to help Delaware's poultry producers export their products to a global market," said Governor Minner. "I want to congratulate Mountaire for their efforts to supply quality poultry products to Cuba, which opens up a new economic venue for Delaware."

"We are interested in expanding our export business, and thanks to the contacts and introductions Delaware Agriculture Secretary Michael Scuse was able to provide, Mountaire is expanding our export business to include shipment of our chicken to Cuba," said Wise. "Dealing with Cuba is difficult since a company must go through the Cuban government to do business in this country; therefore, it is important that we build a relationship and have an on-going open dialogue with all principals to determine the government's needs and requirements. The inroads we made have led to the increase of our export opportunities and growth for Delaware products, Delaware agriculture and Delaware farmers."

"Cuba is an attractive market for us. With 11 million people located so close to our country, Cuba is a natural customer," added Wise.

"My goal for this trade mission to Cuba was to explore the potential for Delaware agricultural products and to promote their sale. We more than achieved the goal with Mountaire's success and the quality time I spent with Pedro Alvarez, chairman of Alimport," said Scuse, who led a Delaware delegation on a trade mission to Cuba in March. "The mission was very informative, and I believe that our agricultural producers are in a good position to take advantage of other potentially lucrative opportunities with poultry, wheat, soybeans, apples and dairy cattle. We are glad to join the other 38 states that are currently exporting to Cuba."

"I am very pleased with the immediate results of this trade mission, which is a clear testament to our state's strength as a major exporter," said Jennifer Davis, director of the Office of Management and Budget. "The team headed by Secretary Scuse and our International Trade office did an excellent job."